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CHARLIE BAKER
GOVERNOR

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KARYN POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Transition at Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

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Secretary Walker to depart, Rosalin Acosta named incoming Secretary effective July 1st

BOSTON - Today, Governor Charlie Baker and Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito announced the upcoming departure of Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Ronald L. Walker, II, and introduced Rosalin Acosta, a financial and banking service professional with over thirty years of experience, as incoming Secretary, effective July 1st.

"Since taking office, we have been committed to growing Massachusetts' economy, creating jobs and ensuring our workforce has the opportunity to gain the skills and education necessary to meet the demands of employers today and into the future," **said Governor Baker**. "Our success in doing so is a testament to the Commonwealth's already highly-skilled and educated workforce, and Secretary Walker's ability to empower employers, educators and advocates to collaborate. We are grateful for Ron's strong contributions and efforts to lead the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and wish him well in his future endeavors. Our administration welcomes Rosalin to pick up where he left off, bringing her devotion and experience to the cabinet to make Massachusetts' communities stronger."

"Across the Commonwealth's cities and towns, employers and educators are communicating and collaborating at a deeper level on regional strategies for workforce development and economic growth thanks to Ron's leadership and his hard work on important initiatives like the Workforce Skills Cabinet," **said Lt. Governor Polito**. "We welcome Rosalin's experience and passion for community and public service as she joins the administration and begins her work to continue bolstering Massachusetts' workforce."

Under Secretary Walker's management, the Baker-Polito Administration has made many advancements in the development of the Commonwealth's labor workforce, including a focus on addressing the workforce skills gap and investing in equipment and capacity building for training programs which included:

- Established the [Workforce Skills Cabinet](#) under the leadership of the Secretaries of Labor and Workforce Development, Housing and Economic Development and Education, and the task force to address [Economic Opportunity for Populations Facing Chronically High Rates of Unemployment](#) to [develop recommendations](#) and implement strategy for bridging the gap in employers' demand for skilled workers and the training for residents to obtain successful careers, especially among chronically unemployed or underemployed populations.
- Established the [Workforce Skills Capital Grant Program](#), which as of this afternoon will have awarded over \$26 million to 67 different vocational schools, community colleges and traditional public high schools to purchase vocational technical equipment and expand skills training programs for careers in growing industries. This included economic development legislation signed by Governor Baker last legislative session [authorizing \\$45 million for the program](#) over three years.
- Developed and passed legislation establishing and streamlining the [Massachusetts Workforce Development Board](#) to meet federal requirements and advise the administration on improving the public workforce system and aligning policies to strengthen regional economies.
- Modernized the Department of Unemployment Assistance to help improve services for the unemployed, including bringing down wait times for assistance, significantly reducing the backlogs of claims, improving customer service, and catalyzing programs into federal compliance for the first time in 10 years.
- Created a new [Regional Planning Initiative](#) aimed at addressing the skills gap by bringing together regional teams of employers, educators, and workforce and economic development professionals to create a statewide blueprint for growth strategies across every region of the Commonwealth, and [\\$2 million in support for 14 regional partnerships](#) preparing unemployed or underemployed residents.
- Awarded over \$37 million in Workforce Training Fund Program grants to advance the job skills of 28,934 of Massachusetts' workers.
- Secured over \$9 million in federal funding to increase apprenticeships in education and healthcare and improve job opportunities for women, minorities, lower-income populations, those with disabilities and the unemployed.
- Launched an [Opioid Alternative Pathway pilot](#) with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to help injured workers who have settled workers' compensation claims coordinate alternative pain management treatment, aimed at limiting the use of opioids or other narcotics.

During Secretary Walker's tenure the unemployment rate has dropped from 5.1% to 3.9%, 142,300 jobs have been added to the economy, unemployment has been reduced by 41,302 residents, and today the Massachusetts labor force is the largest it has ever been since they began taking records in 1976.

"It has been one of the great honors of my life to serve the Commonwealth and the Baker-Polito administration. I'm particularly proud of our efforts to improve services for the unemployed and address the workforce skills gap" said **Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Ronald L. Walker, II**. "Ensuring that employers have access to a talented workforce, and that employees have the skills they need to get a good paying job in the new economy, is of vital to the welfare of Massachusetts. I have every confidence in Rosalin's unique ability to take the Baker-Administration's modernization efforts at the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development to the next level."

"I am honored by the opportunity Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito have extended to me to join this administration, serve the Commonwealth and build on the progress that has been made thus far under Secretary Walker's stewardship," said **incoming Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta**. "I look forward to working with the dedicated public servants throughout the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, its agencies and advising bodies to advance the development and strength of Massachusetts' workforce."

About Rosalin Acosta:

Rosalin Acosta recently stepped down as the Senior Vice President and Managing Director for Enterprise Wealth Management at Enterprise Bank in Lowell, where she oversaw the operations of the bank's Wealth Management and Brokerage divisions since 2013. A widely respected financial and banking service professional with over thirty years of experience in Greater Boston financial institutions, Acosta has also worked in senior executive roles at TD Bank and Sovereign Bank (now Santander). Acosta serves in many community and civic capacities, including as a Board Member of The Boston Foundation, a Board Overseer at Boston Children's Hospital since 2009, where she was a founding member of Milagros Para Ninos, and a 14-year Member of the Boston Chapter of the Association of Latino Professionals For America (ALPFA). Acosta is a Director and Planning Member of the Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board and was appointed a Northern Essex Community College Trustee by Governor Baker in 2016. Acosta has been named one of Boston's Most Influential Women by the Women of Harvard Club in 2014, where she serves on the Leadership Committee, and El Planeta's Top 100 Most Influential Hispanics in Massachusetts for three consecutive years. Born in Cuba, Acosta earned a Bachelor of Arts from Wesleyan University in Connecticut where she was a member of the Women's Varsity Ice Hockey Team. She is the proud mother of five children and an avid traveler, runner and cyclist.

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